

Richard Woodward House (The Beehive)  
East side of Concord Road, 1.2 miles  
south of State Route 926 (Street Road)  
Westtown Vicinity (Thornbury Township)  
Chester County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1192

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PA,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-1192

## RICHARD WOODWARD HOUSE (The Beehive)

Location: East side of Concord Road, 1.2 miles south of State Route 926 (Street Road), Westtown Vicinity (Thornbury Township), Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: David W. Measuroll, Westtown, Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: This house, although much altered, is of interest because the original section was possibly built in the last decade of the 17th century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Richard Woodward settled tract 1687 - deeded 130 acres to son Richard 1698, who sold 1724 to George Townsend, who sold 1726 to Henry Cock, he to son Benj. 1730, and he to son Benj. 1765, and his heirs 1783 to Jesse Harry, and he to Caleb Brinton 1787. It remained in his family until 1902 when bought by Caroline Choate, who sold 1907 to Huston Wyeth, who sold 1909 to Morris Dallett, whose heirs sold 1932 to D. S. Fahrney, who sold 1937 to present owners.
2. Date of erection: The site of an earlier house on the tract has not been discovered. It is not known for sure if Richard Woodward, Sr. built any part of the present house. The main section of the house was built circa 1700. The one-and-a-half-story stone springhouse to the northeast of the house (originally not connected) was possibly the original building on the tract built during the last decade of the 17th century.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction: None known. The first floor was simply two rooms divided by a board partition; second floor had a small hall and three small bedrooms. There is a springhouse to the northeast of the house that may be the first house on the property from the last decade of the 17th century.
5. Alterations and additions: A one-and-a-half-story random rubble lean-to with a large cooking fireplace, was added to

the north elevation of the main block in the mid 18th century. The tile roof was added in 1910. After this, the partition on the first floor of the main section was removed, making one large room. In the 1930s some second-floor partitions were changed when a bathroom was installed. Some of the original poplar partitions still remain. The windows in the west wall have been enlarged. A one-story random rubble kitchen wing was added to the north elevation of the lean-to in 1938. The one-and-a-half-story random rubble springhouse to the north-east of the house, possibly dating from the last decade of the 17th century, was originally separate from the house. It was remodeled and connected to the kitchen wing circa 1938.

6. Important old views and references:

Views: Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania, has a post card from circa 1905 and several pictures from then on.

References: Sources of information to be found in the Chester County Historical Society - Classified printed and manuscript files under heading: Thornbury Township Lands.

Lewis Woodward, Genealogy of the Woodward Family, Ferris Bros., Wilmington, Delaware, 1879.

Janetta W. Schoonover, The Brinton Genealogy, MacCrellish & Quigley, Trenton, New Jersey, 1924.

B. Historical Persons and Events Connected with the Structure:

The origin of the name "Beehive" is not known. It has long been associated with the house and according to local legend pertains to the Brinton family who had many children continually buzzing in and out of the house, hence the name "Beehive." Also, it is possible that there was at one time a beehive oven.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house, although much altered, is of interest because the original section was probably built in the last decade of the 17th century.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main house is 37'-8" (three-bay front) x 22' and is two-and-a-half-stories with partially exposed basement. There is a one-and-a-half-story lean-to on the north elevation; a one-story kitchen wing to the north of the lean-to; and a one-and-a-half-story springhouse connected to the east elevation of the kitchen.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Coursed rubble (south front elevation of the main house) and random rubble. There is a stepped belt course on the south elevation of the house.
4. Chimneys: The cellar under the chimney in the east gable has not been dug out; a large arch supports the chimney on the north wall of the north wing. The chimney in the west gable is similar in support to the west chimney of the 1704 Brinton House.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The original back door (north) was changed and lowered when the north wing was built. The door openings appear original. There is a pedimented hood over the south (front) entrance.
  - b. Windows and shutters: One second floor window to the north has been bricked up, and two windows to the west have been enlarged. The windows in basement and first floor, south and west walls, are arched.
6. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Steep-pitched gable roof; yellow tiles added circa 1910.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Probably original.
  - c. Dormers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The first floor of the main house was originally two rooms, as was the second floor. The first-floor partition has been removed, creating one large room, and some of the second-floor partitions have been changed to accommodate a bathroom. The attic was originally one large room, but a

partition was added early. The 18th century addition is the present dining room with a bedroom and bath on the second floor. The northern-most addition from 1938 contains a kitchen which is connected by a passageway to the springhouse. The springhouse has been converted into a guest room and bath.

2. Stairways: Originally there was an enclosed newel stairway in both the east and west walls; the former is still in place and leads to the attic. There is also a stairway in the south wall of the dining room leading to the second floor and basement.
3. Flooring: The oak and poplar flooring on the second floor is original.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Beams exposed, although originally both first and second floor ceilings had been plastered. Summer beams in good condition; they extended below the plaster level.
5. Doorways and doors: Partly original.
6. Trim: Never had baseboard trim; trim on second floor mostly original, but much was replaced in 1930s remodeling and later.
7. Hardware: Very little original hardware remains; however much has been replaced by hardware of the same general period and later.
8. Lighting: Modern electricity.
9. Heating: Originally by fireplaces located on the west and east walls in the main portion, and the south wall in the north addition. The second floor fireplace on the east wall has been plastered in, and on the second floor west wall there is evidence of an opening where a stove was connected to a fireplace. Steam heat was introduced in 1938.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces south, and is close to a narrow country road.
2. Enclosures: Hedges; the space between the springhouse and the east wall of the main house has been squared off by a stone fence on the south and east sides creating an inner court with access only through the house. It is in